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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Fifty-first session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 64th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Friday, 10 March 1995, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. BIN HITAM (Malaysia)

CONTENTS

DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIFTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

REPORT TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ON THE FIFTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE COMMISSION (continued)

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE SUDAN

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

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GE.95-12332 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m.

DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIFTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE COMMISSION (agenda item 27) (E/CN.4/1995/L.1)

1. The CHAIRMAN reminded delegations that the draft provisional agenda for the fifty-second session (E/CN.4/1995/L.1) was entirely technical and indicative in nature, and did not require any action by the Commission. The appropriate changes would be made in order to reflect the adoption that morning of draft resolution E/CN.4/1995/L.92 under agenda item 25. Agenda item 22 on page 12 of the English version should be deleted, since that was an item considered by the Commission every two years.

2. Mr. HYNES (Canada), supported by Ms. WENSLEY (Australia), Mr. NIELSEN (Denmark), Mr. LILLO (Chile), Mr. BOITCHENKO (Russian Federation) and Mr. MELIK-CHAKHNAZAROV (Armenia), was of the view that indigenous questions should be considered under a separate item; his delegation would pursue that point at the beginning of the Commission's next session.

3. Mr. van WULFFTEN PALTHE (Netherlands), referring to the title of item 5 (b), said that three resolutions had been adopted at the current session of the Commission. One, adopted by a vote, requested a new sub-item, but the other two, adopted by consensus, had not made such a request and had used the original title of agenda item 5.. He wondered why the new title failed to take into account the two consensus resolutions adopted.

4. Mr. KUZNIAR (Poland) agreed with the previous speaker concerning the title of item 5 (b). The Commission should not prejudge whether the existing international economic order was unjust or represented an obstacle to the implementation of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

5. Mrs. FERRIOL ECHEVARRIA (Cuba) noted that the title of item 5 (b) was fully in keeping with Commission resolution 1995/13.

6. Mr. SOUALEM (Algeria) said it would be appropriate to consider Commission resolution 1995/81 under item 3 at the next session, in accordance with the reference to that effect in paragraph 12 of the text.

7. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Commission took note of the document.

8. It was so decided.

REPORT TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ON THE FIFTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE COMMISSION (agenda item 28) (continued) (E/CN.4/1995/L.10 and addenda and E/CN.4/1995/L.11 and addenda)

Documents E/CN.4/1995/L.10 and Add.2, 3, 14, 20 and 23

9. Ms. WENSLEY (Australia), referring to paragraph 9 of document E/CN.4/1995/L.10/Add.14, said that her delegation had also made a statement and requested that that fact should be reflected in the text of that paragraph.

10. The CHAIRMAN said that if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Commission wished to adopt documents E/CN.4/1995/L.10 and Add.2, 3, 14, 20 and 23.

11. It was so decided.

Documents E/CN.4/1995/L.11/Add.5, 6, 7, 8 and 9

12. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Commission wished to adopt documents E/CN.4/1995/L.11/Add.5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

13. It was so decided.

14. The CHAIRMAN said that, as agreed earlier, the other documents would be adopted ad referendum. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Commission wished to adopt the report as a whole, on the understanding that delegations had two weeks to submit any corrections to the Secretariat.

15. It was so decided.

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE SUDAN

16. Mr. ELKARIB (Sudan) said that his delegation had unfortunately witnessed the continued domination of the Commission by the big Powers and the imposition of their own concepts. That would only complicate the efforts of the international community to achieve full respect for human rights and unnecessarily create tensions in relations between the countries and peoples of the world. His delegation extended its sincere appreciation to all those who had not supported the draft resolution on the situation of human rights in the Sudan (1995/77), which constituted a regrettable attempt by certain countries to force the Sudan to submit to their objectives and to abandon its independent line; it also thanked those delegations, such as Egypt and Sri Lanka, that had voiced objections on the question of monitors in paragraph 22 of that resolution.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

17. Mr. RAM (Nepal), speaking on behalf of the Asian Group, said that he wished to make a number of comments about the Commission's current session.

18. The Asian Group was concerned about the distribution of texts at the eleventh hour, which had led to unnecessary haste in their consideration. Moreover, the Commission must exercise prudence in the submission of draft resolutions so as not to venture into areas that exceeded its competence and capabilities, which would also raise problems in respect of financial implications. The Secretariat should regularly publish statistics concerning the technical aspects of proceedings, such as the number of speakers on each item, the amount of time spoken, how delegations voted, the presentation of reports, guest speakers, etc. Lastly, it was important to ensure that Governments received the reports of special rapporteurs and working groups sufficiently in advance to be able to give them the consideration they deserved.

19. The Asian Group was deeply concerned that the principles of the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights as agreed upon by consensus in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action were not being respected. It was to be hoped that the next session of the Commission would be more forward-looking in all respects.

20. Mr. FALL (Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights) said that a number of the resolutions and decisions adopted would have an impact on the activities, structures and timetable of the Centre for Human Rights.

21. With regard to its activities, four working groups would hold meetings, namely, the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, the pre-sessional working group on minorities, the inter-sessional open-ended working group on a draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, as well as the basic measures needed for their prevention and eradication and the inter-sessional open-ended working group on a draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on involvement of children in armed conflicts.

22. The Centre would assist the special rapporteurs and independent experts that the Commission had appointed. Moreover, with the financial support of the international community, it would implement the Commission's recommendations on technical assistance to Rwanda, Burundi, El Salvador, Guatemala and Togo, as well as those concerning the opening of field offices to help in the implementation of certain mandates.

23. As to structures, the Commission had requested the Centre to create focal units on the question of toxic wastes and the question of the right to development.

24. The decision to hold the Commission's next regular session from 18 March to 26 April 1966 was unquestionably the one that would have the greatest impact on the Centre's timetable of work. He would use that important decision as a means of further rationalizing, programming and improving the procedure governing the rapporteur system.

25. He also intended to improve the Commission's working conditions, notably with regard to available seating. The contacts established with the General Services of the United Nations at Geneva had confirmed that the work of refurbishing the Assembly Hall, to last nearly one year, would soon begin.

26. After the customary exchange of courtesies, the CHAIRMAN declared the Commission's fifty-first session closed.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.